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CHEMISTRY NOBEL PRIZE GOES TO TWO WOMEN SCIENTISTS

Frenchwoman Emmanuelle Charpentier and Jennifer Doudna of the US jointly won the prize for their work on gene editing

TOOL TO CHANGE DNA WITH HIGH PRECISION

Working on opposite sides of the Atlantic, the two developed a method known as CRISPR/Cas9 that can be used to change the DNA of animals, plants and micro organisms with extremely high precision. The US-French duo's technology has been transformative for basic science research and it could also be used to treat, or even cure, inherited illnesses | P14

POTENTIAL TO CURE GENETIC DISORDERS

- The genome editing tool has contributed to many discoveries; in medicine, clinical trials of new cancer therapies are under way
- It is also being tested for its potential to treat sickle cell anaemia
- However, critics say that without regulation, Crispr could be used to create "designer babies", opening up an ethical minefield

FIRST

THIS IS THE 1ST TIME CHEMISTRY NOBEL HAS GONE TO A WOMEN-ONLY TEAM

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILUPURAM • KOLLAM • WARANGAL • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Centre finally okays suburban rail for Bengaluru

6-year deadline set for ₹15k crore project; No official announcement due to poll code

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

THREE decades after it was originally proposed, the Union Cabinet on Wednesday gave the green signal for the ₹15,767 crore dedicated Suburban Rail Project for the City, according to South Western Railway sources. However, no formal announcement has been made either at the Cabinet briefing in New Delhi by Railway Minister Piyush Goyal or by railway officials in Karnataka in view of the Model Code of Conduct in place for the Raja Rajeshwari Nagar and Sira Assembly bypolls.

Bengaluru Central MP P C Mohan said, "Work on the suburban rail network will start soon. The State Government is very keen on it and Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa, in particular, has taken personal interest in the project."

An ambitious deadline of six years has been set for completion of the project with the KSR Bengaluru City-to-international airport line to be taken up on priority, a source said. Karnataka Rail Infrastructure Development Enterprises (K-RIDE), a joint venture between the Ministry of Railways and the State Government, will implement the project.

The cost of the 148.17-km network was reduced by nearly ₹3,000 crore in February this year from the originally proposed cost of ₹18,621 crore. Of the allocation, ₹2,854 crore has earmarked for coaches, set to be implemented through the PPP model, said a senior railway source. "A total of 306 AC coaches will be built in this model and leased to the private partner for a 30-year period.

A State Government official said, "The ₹15,767 crore proposed is inclusive of taxes and duties, land cost, interest during construction and cost escalation."

The Government of Karnataka, Ministry of Railways, Niti Aayog and the Ministry of Finance had approved the project earlier, with approval from the Cabinet Committee of Economic Affairs headed by the Prime Minister pending for the last three months. P2

THE SUBURBAN CORRIDOR ROUTE

KSR (Bengaluru City)-Yesvantpur-Yelahanka-Devanahalli-Kempe Gowda International Airport: **41.4 km**

Baiyappanahalli-Banaswadi-Lottegollahalli-Whitefield-Yesvantpur-Chikkabanavara : **25.01 km**

Kengeri-Cantonment-Whitefield: **35.52 km**

Heelalige-Baiyappanahalli-Channasandra-Yelahanka-Rajanukunte: **46.24 km**

Total: 148.17 km

Occupying public ways for protest illegal: SC on Shaheen Bagh

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

THE Supreme Court on Wednesday ruled that public places cannot be occupied indefinitely for protests, which must be carried out in designated areas alone.

A bench headed by Justice S K Kaul said, "Democracy and dissent go hand in hand, but then the demonstrations expressing dissent have to be in designated places alone. The present case was not even one of protests taking place in an undesignated area, but was a blockage of a public way which caused grave inconvenience to commuters."

The order was passed on a batch of petitions against the anti-Citizenship Amendment Act protests in Delhi's Shaheen Bagh. "While appreciating the existence of the right to peaceful protest against legislation (keeping in mind the words of Pulitzer Prize winner Walter Lippmann, who said, "In a democracy, the opposition is not only tolerated as constitutional, but must be maintained because it is indispensable"), we have to make it unequivocally clear that public ways and public spaces cannot be occupied in such a manner and that too indefinitely," the bench ruled.

"The administration ought to take action to keep the area clear of encroachments and obstructions," the bench said, while calling their inability to resolve the protest as unfortunate. It noted that the court was forced to intervene because there was no action by the administration.

The bench also highlighted how social media can lead to a highly polarising environment, as in Shaheen Bagh. "We live in an age of technology and development and social media often sees parallel conversations with no constructive outcome," it said.

Administration ticked off

"In what manner the administration should act is their responsibility and they should not hide behind the court orders or seek support therefrom for carrying out their administrative functions," the bench said

K'taka gets ₹1,400 cr in IGST dues

ANUSHA RAVI | @ Bengaluru

IN a relief to the state in times of financial crisis, Karnataka has received ₹1,400 crore in IGST settlement for the month of September.

While many states like Telangana, AP, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh have reported short credit of IGST, officials in the Karnataka Finance Department said that the state received its regular settlement of ₹1,400 crore of the ₹24,000 crore pending IGST payments announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday.

"This (shortfall) relates to states that are entitled to IGST settlement due to 2017-18 miscalculation. Karnataka was not eligible for any settlement in this. However, regular IGST settlement of ₹1,400 crore for September has been received for Karnataka," said Additional Chief Secretary, Finance Department ISN Prasad.

In the 42nd GST Council meeting, Home Minister and Karnataka's representative Basavaraj Bommai had requested immediate release of the IGST settlement. P7

BBMP Marshals collect fine from people for violating Covid-19 guidelines at Ulsoor in Bengaluru on Wednesday | EXPRESS

Under public pressure, state govt slashes fine for not wearing mask

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

AT a time when Covid-19 cases continue to surge, and with less than two weeks to go for the Dasara holiday season, the State Government on Wednesday issued orders scaling back the penalty amount for not wearing masks from ₹1,000 to ₹250 in urban areas, and from ₹500 to ₹100 in rural areas, with immediate effect.

The Chief Minister's Office confirmed to *TNIE*, "This has been done based on public feedback. Many people are saying that they cannot pay such heavy fines."

However, this decision has not gone down well with the BBMP and health department officials, who said that the idea of imposing a hefty penalty is that it acts as a deterrent. "With the rising cases of people not wearing a mask and readily forking out ₹100 as fine, the revision was proposed. The hefty penalty of ₹1,000 was bringing in a sense of fear. We had in fact suggested that it be made ₹2,000 or initiating some other punitive action along with the ₹1,000 fine. This downward revision will only make matters worse," a senior health department official said, seeking anonymity.

This is for the second time that the government has slashed penalty for not wearing masks after coming under public pressure. In May, it had revised downward the penalty from ₹1,000 to ₹100. This was after it had ordered that first-time offenders will pay ₹1,000 and a second offence will entail ₹2,000 fine. P2

TODAY'S IPL MATCH

HYDERABAD vs PUNJAB

KXIP have played good cricket, but have not been able to close matches and are bottom of the table. Can SRH, who are not clicking as a unit, get back to winning ways against Punjab?

ODDS: SRH 9/10 | KXIP 11/10

LIVE: STAR SPORTS 1/HOTSTAR @ 7.30 PM

KICK-OFF
SPORT RETURNS WITH FOOTBALL

I-League Qualifier, beginning in Kolkata on Thursday, is the first national-level event to be held in India after the lockdown. Ten teams will take part in a bio-secure environment | P13

EXPRESS READ

Rhea Chakraborty gets bail in drugs case

Mumbai: The Bombay High Court on Wednesday granted bail to actor Rhea Chakraborty in a drugs case related to actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death. The court also granted bail to Rajput's domestic aides Dipesh Sawant and Samuel Miranda, but rejected the plea of Rhea's brother Showik. P10

Palaniswami is TN CM pick for 2021 polls

Chennai: Incumbent Tamil Nadu Chief Minister K Palaniswami was on Wednesday named by the AIADMK as the party's Chief Ministerial candidate for the 2021 assembly elections in the state, ending a brewing crisis triggered by differences between him and his deputy O Panneerselvam over the leadership issue. P7

Call to ban or monitor festival sale by e-tailers

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

DEEP discounting by Amazon and Flipkart during 'festival sales' violates FDI policy and causes huge losses to the exchequer, the Confederation of All India Traders alleged, demanding that such predatory pricing be banned or sales on these platforms be monitored.

In a letter to Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, it suggested a task force be set up to determine the shortfall in GST and other taxes on the basis of the original value of the products sold on these sites. Flipkart's festival season sale will run from October 16 till 21, while Amazon's will start from October 17.

Festive season sale is important for Amazon and Flipkart. Last year, the two sold goods worth a record ₹19,000 crore.

During the 'sale' period, goods listed on these sites are priced up to 80% lower. E-commerce firms in their defence maintain that it is the sellers on their platforms who decide the pricing and that their role is confined to connecting them with buyers.

According to CAIT national general secretary Praveen Khandelwal, these firms are allowed to do only Business-to-Business activities but they are conducting Business-to-Consumers sales, which is a violation of India's FDI policy.

Save trees, use paper judiciously: Law students' plea

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

A group of law students have approached the Karnataka High Court with a public interest petition contending that the use of a single side of legal- or foolscap-size paper is detrimental to the environment as it leads to cutting of more trees. They have sought directions to mandate the use of A4 size paper, printed on both sides, for legal purposes in the High Court and in its all subordinate courts to prevent serious environmental damage.

A division bench of Chief Justice Abhay Shreeniwas Oka and Justice Ashok S Kinagi, which heard the petition on Tuesday, issued notice to its Registrar General.

The petitioners — Akriti Agarwal of Lucknow, Bhavana M of Bengaluru and Lakshya Purohit of Udaipur — have sought directions to the Registrar to amend the High Court of Karnataka Rules to mandate the use of A4 size paper, printed on both sides. They pointed out that A4 size paper is easily available and is being used by all government departments and the corporate sector, which are the major litigants. It is only in courts where legal size/foolscap paper is being used exclusively. This is a colonial practice and had been making justice only costly and inaccessible, they contended. P7

ASHWANI KUMAR

FORMER CBI CHIEF FOUND HANGING AT HIS RESIDENCE

Former CBI director and Nagaland Governor Ashwani Kumar was found hanging at his residence in Shimla on Wednesday, officials said. Kumar became CBI director in 2008, in the midst of the investigation into the Aarushi Talwar murder case. He later went on to become Governor of Nagaland | P10

Fresh blow to Indians as Don tightens H-1B rules

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi / Bengaluru

WITH an eye on next month's elections, US President Donald Trump on Wednesday announced tightening of non-immigrant visa rules to benefit American workers.

The move is expected to impact thousands of IT professionals from India, who make up one of the largest beneficiaries of H-1B visas. Already, a large number of Indians on H-1B visas have lost their jobs owing to the pandemic that has severely hit the US economy.

The H-1B is a non-immigrant visa that allows US firms to employ foreign workers in speciality occupations that require expertise. The new rules narrow the definition of 'specialty occupation', making it difficult for companies and workers to avail the H-1B visa.

Companies will also have to file additional documentation to prove that they genuinely need H-1B workers.

The new rules will make it more expensive for US companies to bring in foreign workers under the H-1B visa programme as the minimum wage under H-1B is set to increase.

With confusion prevailing over whether the new rules will apply to only new visas or to existing visa holders as well, the US Department of Homeland Security will release detailed guidelines next week.

SEEKING LUCK

DKS hopes to conjure a win with woman power and vaastu

ASHWINI M SRIPAD
@ Bengaluru

ARMED with astro advice, KPCC president and Congress troubleshooter D K Shivakumar has plunged into the bypoll battle, undeterred by the recent CBI raids. His job on hand: Drawing up a political strategy and galvanising the party cadre.

It is said that Shivakumar, who strongly believes in star power, consulted an astrologer to choose the 'right candidates', and was advised to field a woman from Raja Rajeshwari Nagar. And that was how Kusuma Hanumantharayappa, wife of late IAS officer DK Ravi and daughter of JDS leader Hanumantharayappa, came to be picked.

Shivakumar had been similarly advised in 2004, and fielded Tejaswini Gowda against former PM Deve Gowda in Kanakapura; the rookie had famously slayed the Goliath.

Speculation over Kusuma's candidature began early last week, after a photograph of her meeting Adichunchanagiri Mutt pontiff Nirmalanandanatha Swamiji went viral.

It is said that Shivakumar was also advised to make the KPCC office building on Queen's Road vaastu-compliant. Accordingly, the facade has got an imposing new Greco-Roman look, with six pairs of Corinthian pillars and a pediment, similar to his Global Academy of Technology in RR Nagar. The door and window frames have been changed, and so has his seating position in his chamber.

Earlier this year, Shivakumar had performed a special puja and yajna at the Shri Pitambara Peetha Baglamukhi Temple in Datia, Madhya Pradesh. After his release on bail from Tihar jail last October, he visited religious places from Mysuru to Kalaburagi.

Renovation work under way at the KPCC office in Bengaluru | VINOD KUMAR T